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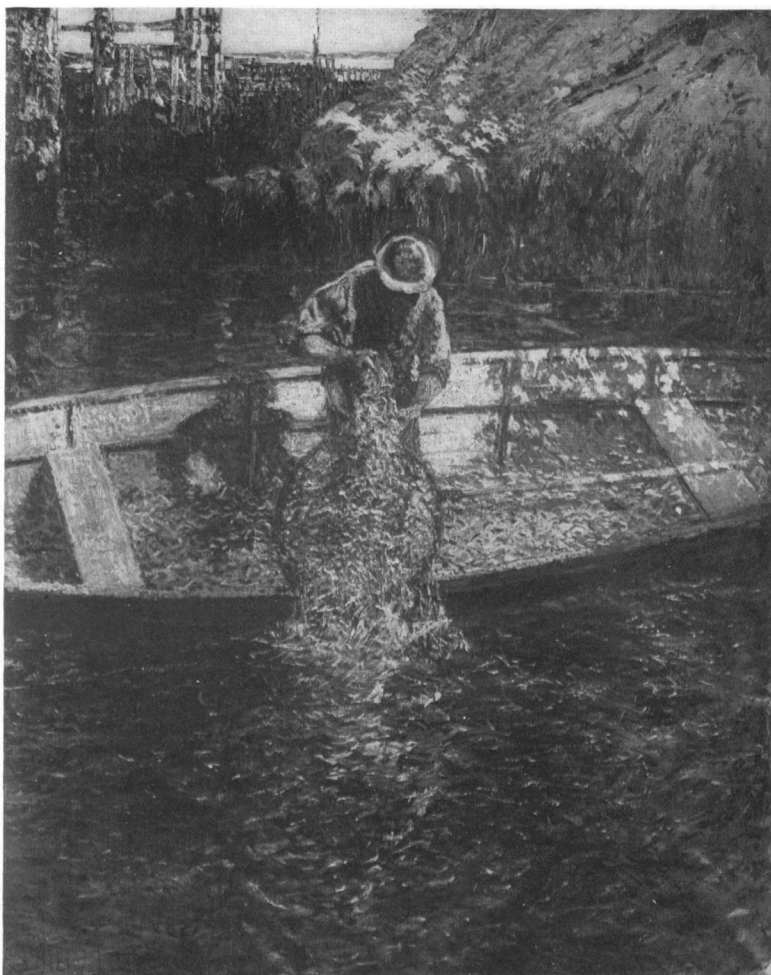
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THE HERRING DIPPER

PHILIP LITTLE

PAINTINGS BY PHILIP LITTLE

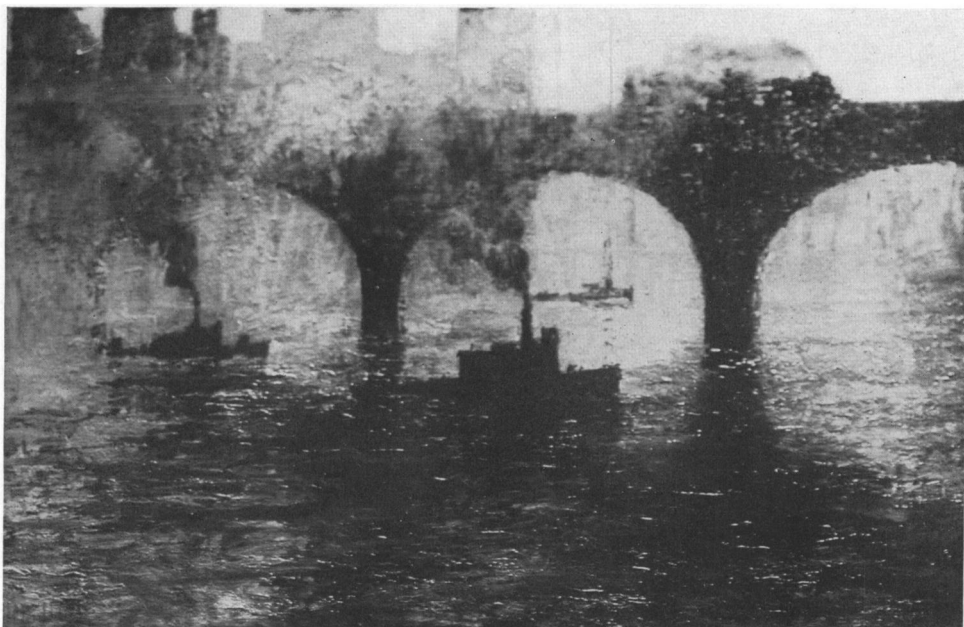
BY E. OSCAR THALINGER

VISITORS during the summer months at the City Art Museum, Forest Park, St. Louis, have had an excellent opportunity of viewing a collection of paintings by Mr. Philip Little of Boston.

These works deserve more than a mere passing mention, for it is to such men as Mr. Little that America must look for the creation of an art which really has significance—men who are open to our national influences and who

have the moral courage to stand by their convictions.

Philip Little was born in Swampscott, near Boston, September 6, 1857. The son of a business man, he was intended for a business career, in the technical side of which he was instructed for a time at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He persuaded his father to let him go into the designing room, and this developed the necessity for special training, for which he went to



THE AWAKENING OF DAY

PHILIP LITTLE

the Lowell School of Design at the Institute of Technology, subsequently going to the Forbes Lithograph Company in Boston, where he learned to lithograph and draw carefully. From here Mr. Little went to the School of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, for two seasons. These varied experiences bring his biography down to the period of ten years ago, when, to use his own words, he "seemed to awaken from a sort of sleep, and began to see sunshine, as well as nature, in silhouette"; and beginning again with entirely fresh ideas, developed an individual artistic expression. Thus free from any direct European influence this artist has been fully open to American national influences, and aims to express in his art his strong native feeling.

Rain, snow, sunlight and shadow, all are interpreted by him with an equally thorough understanding. In the exhibition in St. Louis were thirty-three canvases in all, showing splendid technical rendering, full of keen and healthful feeling, with an exceptional tendency toward convincing strength and solidity; such is the work of this man whose pic-

tures may be styled "purely American."

As an embodiment of spontaneity, vibration and strength—the essentials which combine in evolving his theory—the canvas entitled "The Herring Dipper" is an excellent example. A fisherman is standing in his boat, in the act of drawing in his net with his catch of herring. The boat is already loaded with other fish, and the entire composition is concentrated upon the squirming, writhing, silvery mass, in sunlight, which the artist has so admirably interpreted.

It is, however, in the canvas called "Low Tide" that Mr. Little shows most unusual skill. Looking down along a rough and rocky coast, we view the sea below. The tide has just receded, leaving the ground and rocks strong and clear in color. Foreground, water and sky, each painted in a way peculiar to itself—no similarity of technical rendering, yet each holding together harmoniously. An intimate knowledge is displayed in the painting of the water. We are convinced of it being a separate substance, yet belonging to that of the universe. It is flat, and we are positive that it has found its level. The fore-

ground is a hard, solid, rocky coast, also of individual character, yet part of the whole. The sky overhead is bright and luminous, full of life and movement and a charming feeling of atmosphere pervades throughout the entire picture.

The poetic temperament of the artist is shown in several canvases—one a snow scene, entitled "Solitude"—in which the effect is that of a cold, winter evening. We find ourselves at the foot of a snow-covered ravine, along the outer edge of a Northern mountain forest. A few scraggy tree trunks rise on either side, and before us the setting sun seems to be making a last feeble attempt to burst forth its evening splendor before the shades of night shall conquer all. We are made to feel that we have, just at the last moment, found our way from within the depths of the forest behind us.

"The Awakening of Day" is another interesting painting—broadly handled and poetic in feeling—a study in gold and blue, showing the cool morning atmosphere with a faint suggestion of mistiness, and yet with little life upon the river, when the sun's first golden rays appear, striking the sides of the buildings in the distance and slowly creeping down, alongside the piers of the bridge in the middle distance. The quietness of early morning is only broken by an occasional ferry boat, steadily ploughing its way back and forth, as though embodied with new life and vigor in anticipation of the day's toil to come.

Among the other canvases, "Rainy Night in Washington, D. C.," "Snow Squall at Sunset" and "When the Rain Comes Before the Wind" are all worthy of mention.



LOW TIDE

PHILIP LITTLE